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# **Founding of the Christian Church, 30-100 A. D.**

IN FIFTY STUDIES.

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## *STUDY XIV.*

### **SEC. 12. SAUL'S EARLY CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY.**

**Acts 9: 19b-31; cf. Gal. 1: 17-18.**

35-38 A. D.

DAMASCUS, ARABIA, JERUSALEM, CILICIA.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY.**—(1) Cambridge Bible on Acts, pp. 116-122; (2) Gloag's Comty. on Acts, I: 331-349. [(3) Meyer's Comty. on Acts, pp. 190-193.] (4) Neander's Planting and Training of the Christian Church, I: 91-98; II: 94-104. (5) Bible Dictionary, arts. Arabia, Cilicia, Damascus, Paul, Tarsus. (6) Farrar's Life of Paul, pp. 115-143. (7) Conybeare and Howson's Life of Paul, pp. 79-89. (8) Iverach's Life of Paul, pp. 29-36. [(9) Stalker's Life of Paul, pp. 45-47, 57-58 (47-55).] [(10) Vaughan's Church of the First Days, pp. 202-222.] [(11) Peloubet's Notes, 1892, in loc.] [(12) S. S. Times, Apr. 7, 1883.]

#### **FIRST STEP: FACTS.**

**PARAGRAPH 1.** *v.* 19b, Saul among Christians. *v.* 20, he preaches Christ to the Jews. *v.* 21, amazement at the change in Saul. *v.* 22, his signal success for the Gospel. *Vv.* 19b-22, SAUL PREACHES AT DAMASCUS THE MESSIAHSHIP OF JESUS.

**PAR. 2.** *v.* 23, Saul's life threatened. *v.* 24, the plot discovered. *v.* 25, secret withdrawal from the city. *Vv.* 23-25, SAUL'S FORCED DEPARTURE FROM DAMASCUS.

**PAR. 3.** *v.* 26a, Saul attempts to join the disciples at Jerusalem, *v.* 26b, but they distrust him. *v.* 27, Barnabas assures them of Saul's conversion. *v.* 28, Saul preaches Jesus in Jerusalem, *v.* 29, especially to Hellenists, who threaten to kill him as they had Stephen. *v.* 30, Saul withdraws to Tarsus. *Vv.* 26-30, SAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO JERUSALEM AFTER CONVERSION.

**PAR. 4.** *v.* 31a, the Church everywhere is characterized by peace, *v.* 31b, by true Christian living, *v.* 31c, and by increase in numbers. *V.* 31, PEACE AND GROWTH OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

#### **SECOND STEP: EXPLANATIONS.**

**PARAGRAPH 1.** *v.* 19b, (a) "certain days"—about how long, cf. same expression in Acts 10: 48; 15: 36; 16: 12; 24: 24; 25: 13. [(b) why is so indefinite a note of time used thus frequently by the historian?] (c) how was Saul brought into relations with the disciples? *v.* 20, (a) "straightway"—after conversion, or after the "certain days"? (b) why was no long period of prep-

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aration necessary? (c) why did he go to the synagogues to preach? (d) compare Jesus's similar practice, Matt. 12:9; Mk. 6:2; Lk. 4:16; Jno. 18:20; and Saul's own custom later, Acts 13:5; 14:1; 17:1, 10; 18:4, 19; 19:8. [(e) "Jesus"—cf. AV, what difference?] [(f) "Son of God"—why is this term used rather than Messiah?] v. 21, "all . . . amazed"—Jews, or Christians, or both? v. 22 [(a) "strength"—of faith, conviction, ability, power, or what?] (b) "confounded"—meaning? (c) "proving"—what was the method employed?

PAR. 2. v. 23, (a) "many days"—how long a time, [cf. Acts 9:43; 18:18; 27:7; compare with "certain days" above, as to duration.] (b) where was Saul and how engaged during this period which Luke tells nothing about? (c) why did the Jews wish to kill Saul? [(d) compare this enmity with that which they had shown toward Stephen.] v. 24, (a) "plot . . . known"—in what way? (b) "watched"—had he been driven out of Damascus at the time when he went into Arabia; if so, did they expect he would secretly retreat as before? [(c) compare carefully with this account that given in 2 Cor. 11:32f, and explain the historical situation.] v. 25, (a) "his disciples"—cf. AV, not the Christians in general, but personal devoted followers. (b) "let . . . basket"—explain the oriental customs involved. (c) what size and kind of basket was used, see same word in Matt. 15:37? [(d) compare Josh. 2:15; 1 Sam. 19:12.]

PAR. 3. v. 26, (a) "assayed"—meaning? (b) why did he wish to join the Christian body? (c) why did they mistrust him? v. 27, (a) "Barnabas"—tell all you know of him, cf. Acts 4:36. [(b) is there reason to think he was previously acquainted with Paul; if so, what?] (c) observe the repeated statements as to Saul's actual vision of Jesus. v. 28, "going in and going out"—meaning of the expression? v. 29, (a) "preaching boldly"—what was the substance of his message? (b) "Grecian Jews"—cf. AV and Acts 6:1, 8ff; who were they? (c) what ground for their murderous intent? [(d) compare their hatred of Saul with that of the Damascus Jews?] v. 30, (a) "brethren"—who? (b) "Cæsarea"—locate and explain why Saul was taken there? [(c) what part did Cæsarea play in Saul's later history?] (d) "Tarsus"—locate and describe. (e) why was Saul sent thither?

PAR. 4. v. 31, (a) "the church"—meaning of the term? [(b) compare its use in previous chapters, 2:47; 5:11; 8:1, 3; how did it arise?] (c) locate the districts mentioned, cf. Acts 1:8, and observe the territory now occupied by Christianity. (d) "peace"—cf. AV, any difference? (e) "being edified"—meaning of the expression, cf. marg. rdg.?

### THIRD STEP: TOPICS.

**I. Saul's Two Periods of Work in Damascus.** (1) how came he to be in that city? (2) recount the experience that had made him a Christian. (3) what of time and experience had intervened before he began to preach? (4) what was his message, cf. vv. 20b, 22c? (5) what especial qualifications had he for doing just this work? (6) to whom did he preach, and why? [(7) what effect did Saul's ministry have upon himself?] (8) what success attended his efforts? [(9) compare his preaching as to content, spirit and method, with that of Stephen, and also with that of Peter.] (10) when did he leave Damascus, and why? (11) when did he return, and why? (12) why could he not

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carry on work there? [(13) justify him in choosing retreat instead of martyrdom.]

**2. The Arabian Sojourn.** (1) where does it come in—between *vv.* 22 and 23? (2) why is no mention made of it by Luke? (3) why did Saul go to Arabia on departing from Damascus? (4) study the reference to the Sojourn in Gal. 1:15-18. (5) how much of the three years mentioned did Saul spend in Arabia? (6) what did he do while there: (a) active work, preaching Christ to the Jews of the Dispersion; (b) live in seclusion and meditation, working out his theology and accumulating energy for subsequent activity? (7) which would be in keeping with the character of the man? (8) how much of the Gospel had he in possession before going into Arabia? [(9) explain or justify the tendency to exalt the significance to Saul of this brief period of his early career, which Luke seems not to have known about, and which Saul did not consider important enough for more than a mere mention.]

**3. Saul's First Visit as a Christian to Jerusalem.** (1) how long had he been gone from the city, cf. Gal. 1:18? (2) why had he last left it, and what had happened to those plans? (3) with what purpose was he now returning to Jerusalem, cf. Gal. 1:18? (4) what did he wish to gain from an acquaintance with Peter? (5) explain Barnabas's mediation. (6) whom of the apostles did Saul meet at Jerusalem, cf. Gal. 1:19, and why not the others also? (7) what did he obtain from this conference? (8) what evangelical work did he do in the city, and was this subordinate to the main purpose of his visit? (9) why did he preach to the Grecian Jews? (10) what was the subject and character of their disputation? [(11) compare Saul's preaching to these people with that of Stephen.] (12) was there any difference in their attitude toward the two Christian evangelists? (13) how long did Saul remain in Jerusalem at this time, cf. Gal. 1:18? [(14) what may we suppose to have been the relation of Saul to his former Pharisaic friends during this visit?]

**4. Retirement to and Activity in Cilicia.** (1) what was the occasion of Saul's leaving Jerusalem, cf. Acts 9:29f? (2) compare the reason which he himself gives in Acts 22:17-21. (3) are these mutually exclusive, or can they be harmonized? (4) why would Saul's place of nativity be especially attractive to him as a field of Christian work? (5) how long did he continue in Cilicia, cf. Acts 11:25 (which was in 43 A. D.)? (6) was he engaged in preaching the Gospel and establishing churches, cf. Gal. 1:21ff; Acts 15:23, 41? (7) what put an end to his activity in this field, cf. Acts 11:19-26? (8) was this work among Jews or Gentiles predominantly; i. e. had Saul entered yet on his distinctively Gentile mission? (9) in what particulars was this period one of preparation for his subsequent career? (10) consider that Syria and Cilicia were naturally the next regions beyond Palestine in which to establish the Gospel, so that Saul's work there carried on the march of Christianity toward Rome.

**5. Condition of the Church in 38 A. D.** (1) discuss the reasons for the peace of the Church at this time: (a) the conversion to their own number of their chief persecutor, Saul; (b) the political situation, which concentrated the attention of the Jews upon their pagan oppressors, the Romans (cf. Josephus's *Antiquities* 18:8:2). (2) explain the following descriptions of the Church: (a) "being edified," (b) "walking in the fear of the Lord," (c) "walking in the comfort of the Holy Ghost." (3) enumerate the points made here concerning the condition of the Church. (4) try to form a clear, comprehensive conception of the Christian Church at this stage of its history.

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## FOURTH STEP: OBSERVATIONS.

1. Soon after his conversion Saul began an active, earnest Christian ministry in Damascus.
2. His one aim was to prove to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah, a fact which he now fully comprehended.
3. His intellectual ability, his thorough training, his deep and accurate knowledge of the Old Testament, and his spiritual experience of Jesus, all combined to make him powerful in argumentation and persuasion.
4. He aroused such hostility among the Jews of Damascus that to save his life he was twice forced to leave the city.
5. At the first withdrawal he went into Arabia, where for a year or more he probably preached the Gospel to the Jews of the Dispersion.
6. At the second withdrawal he visited Jerusalem, primarily to make the acquaintance of Peter, through whom he could learn of Christ's earthly career, and come into good relations with the original apostles.
7. He also attempted to preach the Messiahship of Jesus to the Hellenists in Jerusalem, but the effort aroused such intense and active hatred against him that he was obliged to depart from the city.
8. He withdrew to Cilicia, where he worked zealously, establishing Christian churches, and gaining experience for his future mission to the Gentiles.
9. The presence of severe political trouble, and the loss of their chief inquisitor, caused a cessation of the Jewish hostility toward the Christians.
10. The Church now covered all Palestine, was vastly increased in numerical strength, and was characterized by harmony and holy living.

## FIFTH STEP: SUMMARY.

1. Make a statement concerning the Christian Church at this time, noting points of progress and development as to organic form, numbers, geographical extent, doctrine, and practice, since the Christian Dispersion of three years previous.
2. Discuss the activity and experience of Saul from his conversion until his retirement to Tarsus, showing particularly the relation which he sustained to the Jerusalem Church and apostles.
3. Discuss the presence of God in the history recorded in this Section.

## SIXTH STEP: TEACHINGS.

1. Deep experience and conviction of truth lead to the zealous preaching of it.
2. Martyrdom is rarely the highest Christian duty. Saul chose to live for Christ rather than to die for Him, much the harder and much the more useful thing to do.
3. A long period of preparation and practice is necessary before one is fitted to do any great work.
4. Arguments are not answered by persecution.

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## SEC. 13. PETER'S TOUR OF VISITATION TO THE PALESTINIAN CHURCHES.

### Acts 9:32-43.

39-40 A. D.

CIRCUIT THROUGH PALESTINE.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY.**—(1) Cambridge Bible on Acts, pp. 122-125. (2) Gloag's Comty. on Acts, I: 359-356. (3) Meyer's Comty. on Acts, pp. 193-199. [(4) Neander's Planting and Training of the Christian Church, I: 65-66.] (5) Bible Dictionary, arts. Aeneas, Dorcas, Joppa, Lydda, Peter. [(6) Peloubet's Notes, 1892, in loc.] (7) S. S. Times, Apr. 14, 1883.

#### FIRST STEP: FACTS.

**PARAGRAPH 1.** *v.* 32a, Peter's extensive visit to the churches. *v.* 32b, his arrival at Lydda. *v.* 33, he finds the disciple Aeneas afflicted with palsy, *v.* 34, and in Christ's name heals him. *v.* 35, the miracle wins many converts. *Vv.* 32-35, PETER'S MIRACLE AT LYDDA AND ITS RESULTS.

**PAR. 2.** *vv.* 36f, death of the noble Christian Tabitha at Joppa. *v.* 38, Peter summoned thither. *v.* 39, he enters the death chamber, *v.* 40, and restores her to life, *v.* 41, and to her friends. *v.* 42, many are thus influenced to accept Christianity. *v.* 43, Peter remains long in that city. *Vv.* 36-43, PETER'S PROTRACTED MINISTRY IN JOPPA.

#### SECOND STEP: EXPLANATIONS.

**PARAGRAPH 1.** *v.* 32, (a) "it came to pass"—indefinite note of time, how long after Saul's retirement to Tarsus? [(b) "throughout all parts"—Meyer would read "among all Christians," which satisfies the Greek equally well.] (c) "saints"—cf. Acts 9:13, and comments thereon. (d) "Lydda"—locate on map, and describe. [(e) who had established the church there?] *v.* 33, (a) "Aeneas"—is anything more known about him than is here told? (b) "palsied"—how common in the Orient? *v.* 34, (a) "Jesus . . . thee"—cf. Acts 3:1, and state significance of the words. (b) "make . . . bed"—as a sign of the cure. [(c) look up similar cures worked by Jesus.] *v.* 35, (a) "all"—explain the meaning and use of this common hyperbole. (b) "Sharon"—locate the district or place so named. (c) "turned . . . Lord"—why?

**PAR. 2.** *v.* 36, (a) "now"—while Peter was at Lydda. (b) "Joppa"—locate on map and describe. (c) "disciple"—why is this fact noted? [(d) "Tabitha"—is Aramaic, Dorcas is Greek, Gazelle (marg. rdg.) is English, all the same word; by which was she known at that time, compare in *vv.* 39 and 40?] (e) "full of"—a favorite expression with Luke to signify "devotion toward," cf. Acts 6:8; 13:10; 19:28. (f) "almsdeeds"—meaning? *v.* 37, (a) "and . . . days"—a stereotyped formula for historical introduction; what days? (b) "died"—therefore a complete restoration to life took place later. (c) "upper chamber"—was this in accordance with Oriental funeral custom? *v.* 38, (a) "nigh"—how far distant? (b) "disciples"—who? (c) "hearing"—in what way? (d) "two men"—why two? [(e) observe the greater vividness here, as compared with AV.] [(f) "delay not"—did they expect from Peter a miraculous restoration, or did they only anticipate his sympathetic presence at the funeral,

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which could not be long postponed?] *v.* 39, [(a) "Peter . . . went"—was he conscious of what was about to take place?] [(b) "widows"—associates of Tabitha in her good work, or those whom she had benevolently aided?] (c) "coats . . . garments"—difference between them? *v.* 40, (a) "put . . . forth"—cf. Matt. 9:25, for what purpose? [(b) "kneeled down"—observe and consider this attitude for prayer.] (c) "prayed"—for what? [(d) "arise"—why is not Christ's name introduced, as in previous cases?] (e) notice the graphic narration. *v.* 41, (a) "gave . . . hand"—as Jesus had done in a similar instance. (b) "saints . . . widows"—the whole church was interested. *v.* 42, "became known . . . many believed"—a natural consequence, and a primary reason for the working of the miracle. *v.* 43, [(a) see first comment on *v.* 37 above.] (b) "abode"—in order to follow up the evangelical work begun? (c) "many days"—cf. Acts 9:23 and comments; how long a time is meant here—a year? (d) "with . . . tanner"—why is this fact particularly noted? (e) was Simon one of the church members?

### THIRD STEP: TOPICS.

**1. Peter's Missionary Activities.** (1) as overseers of the Christian Church, what duties would the apostles have toward the individual churches springing up everywhere throughout Palestine? (2) reconsider their action in the case of the church in the city of Samaria (ch. 8). [(3) do the apostles seem to have been frequently away from Jerusalem on missionary work, cf. Gal. 1:18f?] (4) what was Peter's purpose in making the extensive circuit which finally brings him to Lydda? (5) when did he set out on this tour, and how long a time did it occupy? (6) consider Peter's miracle-working as a part of his evangelizing activity. [(7) compare in detail Peter's restoration of Tabitha to life with the similar restoration of Jairus's daughter, which Peter had himself witnessed (Mk. 5:22f, 38-42)]. [(8) compare the missionary work of Peter on this tour with that of Paul on his journeys at a later time.]

**2. Peter's Preparation for the Pending Experience.** (1) in what ways would this extended tour among the churches prepare Peter for a larger and higher view of Christianity? (2) bearing in mind the Jewish aversion to the tanner's trade, what does Peter's continued residence with Simon the tanner at Joppa indicate as to his attitude toward the refined Judaic scruples? (3) shall we understand that Peter, as a Galilean, never was burdened with the minutiae of Jewish ceremonial law, or that this was actually a step toward the disregard and ultimate rejection of that law? (4) consider the mental and spiritual character of Peter, whether he was susceptible to new and growing truth, and capable of grasping and disseminating it? (5) compare Peter with others of the original Twelve, as to whether he was the one best fitted to receive and to put into force the supreme conception of the Gospel which was about to be divinely revealed.

### FOURTH STEP: OBSERVATIONS.

1. The narrative leaves Saul at work in Cilicia, and takes up Peter, as he is about to be divinely instructed concerning the relation of the Gospel to the Gentiles.

2. Peter made missionary tours among the Palestinian churches, much as Paul afterward did in Asia Minor and Europe.

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3. Miracle-working was still a part of the apostolic activity, and a means of large accessions to the church.
4. Kneeling to pray was a customary and appropriate religious form among the primitive Christians.
5. Peter manifested in conduct and disposition a readiness to receive the larger revelation.

FIFTH STEP: SUMMARY.

1. Make a brief statement concerning the work of Peter as overseer of the Palestinian churches, and as an evangelist among them.
2. Discuss the preparation which Peter underwent providentially with reference to the revealed truth about to be given to him.
3. Make a statement concerning the character and activity of the primitive Christians, drawn from the descriptive narrative of the disciples at Lydda and Joppa.

SIXTH STEP: TEACHINGS.

1. An unselfish, devout and useful life crowns death with sincere regret and loving, grateful memory.
2. The place to work is where Providence by arrangement of circumstances determines.

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## STUDY XV.

SEC. 14. DIVINE LIGHT ON THE GENTILE PROBLEM  
---PETER INSPIRED TO RECEIVE CORNELIUS AND  
HIS FRIENDS, AS GENTILES, INTO THE CHURCH.

## Acts 10:1-48.

40-41 A. D.

JOPPA, THEN CAESAREA.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.—(1) Cambridge Bible on Acts, pp. 126-139. (2) Gloag's Comty. on Acts, I: 357-385. (3) Meyer's Comty. on Acts, pp. 200-218. (4) Neander's Planting and Training of the Christian Church, I: 66-76; II: 81-87. (5) Bible Dictionary, arts. Caesarea, Centurion, Clean (Unclean), Cornelius, Gentiles, House, Peter, Vision. (6) Farrar's Life of Paul, pp. 144-159. (7) Conybeare and Howson's Life of Paul, pp. 90-96. [(8) Vaughan's Church of the First Days, pp. 223-243.] [(9) Peloubet's Notes, 1892, in loc.] [(10) S. S. Times, Apr. 21, 1883.]

## FIRST STEP: FACTS.

1. Arrange the material of this Section into its proper paragraphic divisions, with appropriate headings. Consider the following:

PAR. 1. *Vv.* 1-8, THE DIVINE COMMUNICATION TO CORNELIUS.

PAR. 2. *Vv.* 9-16, THE DIVINE COMMUNICATION TO PETER.

PAR. 3. *Vv.* 17-23a, PETER AND THE MESSENGERS OF CORNELIUS.

PAR. 4. *Vv.* 23b-33, PETER'S MISSION TO CAESAREA.

PAR. 5. *Vv.* 34-43, PETER'S ADDRESS TO CORNELIUS AND HIS FRIENDS.

PAR. 6. *Vv.* 44-48, GENTILES RECEIVED INTO CHRISTIAN COMMUNION.

2. Prepare a careful paraphrase of Peter's Address (Par. 5), reproducing as exactly as possible the thought and the spirit of the text.

3. Prepare the verse synopses of the entire Section, making them concise and avoiding minor details of the narrative.

[4. Let a paraphrase of the entire Section be written, and the original transcript of the history, thus obtained, be preserved in its appropriate place.]

## SECOND STEP: EXPLANATIONS.

PARAGRAPH 1. *v.* 1, (a) "now"—when? (b) "Caesarea"—locate on map, describe, [and look up other references to this city.] (c) "centurion"—meaning of the name. [(d) consider the character of the centurions mentioned in the New Testament, cf. Matt. 8:5; 27:54; Acts 22:26; 27:3, 43.] (e) "Italian band"—what was this, and why stationed here? *v.* 2, (a) "devout"—meaning, cf. Acts 2:5; 8:2; 17:4; et al. (b) "alms"—to the Jews, cf. Lk. 7:5. *v.* 3, (a) "openly"—i. e. distinctly, consciously. (b) "ninth hour"—what time of day? *v.* 4, (a) cf. AV, note the vivid description. (b) "what . . . Lord"—cf. Acts 9:5, [how did Cornelius know the source of the vision?] (c) "memorial"—explain meaning, cf. Lev. 2:2; Rev. 8:3f; Ps. 141:2. *v.* 5, (a) "Joppa"—how far distant? (b) state facts of Peter's residence there.

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[(c) did Cornelius know Peter at all?] *v.* 6, (a) cf. Acts 9:43. [(b) why located at the "seaside," and why is the fact mentioned?] (c) cf. AV, noting the omission in RV. (d) compare Acts 10:32; 11:14, and explain the omission. (e) observe the parallel with Acts 9:6. *v.* 7, character of the messengers, [and why that number sent?] *v.* 8, (a) "rehearsed all"—of what, and why? (b) "sent"—how soon after the vision?

PAR. 2. *v.* 9, [(a) describe the journey.] (b) "housetop"—explain the construction of houses in the Orient. (c) "to pray"—why go there, cf. Jer. 19:13; Zeph. 1:5? (d) "sixth hour"—what time of day? *v.* 10, [had he been fasting, or was this only the natural hunger before the midday meal?] *v.* 11, "beholdeth"—subjectively? *v.* 12, (a) "wherein were"—as it seemed in the vision. [(b) the text is confused; all animal creation is supposed to be represented.] *v.* 13, "kill . . . eat"—i. e. you are hungry, and all is legitimate food. *v.* 14, (a) "never"—had Peter faithfully kept the ceremonial law? [(b) "common . . . unclean"—any difference in meaning between the two?] *v.* 15, [(a) who is it that speaks to Peter?] [(b) why "God" here instead of Christ?] *v.* 16, what was done thrice, and why that number of times, cf. Jno. 21:15ff.

PAR. 3. *Vv.* 17f, (a) why was it difficult to arrive at the truth revealed? (b) note the graphic description. *vv.* 19f, (a) how was this information given? [(b) "I"—God, or the Holy Spirit; if the latter, consider this function attributed to the third person of the Trinity.] *v.* 21, note Peter's obedience. *v.* 22f, (a) "well reported"—why, cf. Acts 10:2b? [(b) "warned"—cf. Matt. 2:12.] [(c) "hear . . . words"—note the absence of this clause from 10:6, 32, and presence in 11:13f; it probably belongs to the event.]

PAR. 4. *v.* 23b, (a) "certain . . . brethren"—how many, cf. Acts 11:12? (b) were they strict Jewish Christians, cf. Acts 10:45? (c) what was Peter's idea in taking them with him? *v.* 24, (a) "morrow"—how many days since the departure of the messengers, cf. Acts 10:30? [(b) had Cornelius calculated the time of Peter's arrival, and prepared for it?] [(c) why did Cornelius get this important company together on this occasion?] *vv.* 25f, (a) "entered"—the court of the house; enters the interior at *v.* 27. (b) what was Cornelius's idea in offering homage to Peter? (c) why was it declined? *v.* 27, "talked"—at some length, the word implies. *v.* 28, (a) "how"—cf. marg. rdg. [(b) "unlawful"—is there any such prohibition in the Mosaic law; if not, whence arose the doctrine?] (c) what degree of association is meant? (d) "God shewed"—Peter now understood the divine communication. *v.* 29, (a) "gainsaying"—meaning? [(b) "intent"—did he know what they desired of him?] *vv.* 30ff, (a) cf. AV. (b) explain the case here as to time? [(c) "a man"—why so designate an angel?] *v.* 33, what divine message did they expect Peter to deliver to them?

PAR. 5. *vv.* 34f, (a) "opened . . . mouth"—conspicuous Hebraism. (b) "perceive"—when and how had he arrived at this position? (c) "respector of persons"—just what does the expression mean? (d) observe the announced conditions of acceptability with God. *vv.* 36ff, [(a) difficult construction—perhaps best to connect "the word" with following two verses, making three successive sentences after "you know," thus: you know 1) the word sent to the children of Israel; 2) the events which have happened; 3) the divine anointing of Jesus.] [(b) what is meant by "the word"?] [(c) in comparison

with this, what is meant by "that saying"?] (d) "published"—better, happened. (e) "oppressed . . . devil"—the most significant class of cures is cited. (f) "God with him"—cf. Jno. 3:2. *v.* 29, (a) "witnesses"—cf. Lk. 24:48; Acts 3:15; 5:32; et al. (b) "also"—in addition to the sufferings inflicted. (c) "slew . . . tree"—cf. Acts 5:30, explain meaning. *v.* 40f, (a) "gave . . . manifest"—cf. AV. [(b) why were only disciples allowed to see the resurrected Jesus?] (c) cf. Acts 1:22; 1 Cor. 15:6ff. (d) "eat and drink"—cf. Lk. 24:42f; Jno. 21:13; why is this physical fact mentioned? *v.* 42, (a) "charged us"—cf. Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8. (b) "people"—the Jews. (c) "ordained . . . Judge"—cf. Jno. 5:22, 27. (d) "quick and dead"—meaning, cf. 1 Cor. 15:51f; 1 Thess. 4:17; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5. *v.* 43, (a) "prophets"—cf. Isa. 49:6; Joel 2:32; [and find others.] (b) "every one"—cf. Rom. 10:11; 3:22. (c) "remission"—cf. Acts 5:31.

PAR. 6. *v.* 44, (a) "yet spake"—interruption, or only immediate succession? [(b) compare this description of the coming of the Holy Spirit with others, e. g. Acts 2:4; 8:17; 19:6.] (c) "all"—the whole company was as ready as Cornelius. *v.* 45, (a) "they of the circumcision"—Peter's six Joppa companions? (b) the Jews had a proverb that the Holy Spirit never rested upon a Gentile. *v.* 46, (a) cf. Acts 2:4, 11, and treatment under Sec. 4. [(b) "any man"—who of those present might wish to do so, or was it of the nature of a challenge to the whole church?] (c) "forbid"—cf. Matt. 28:19. *v.* 47, (a) why did he not perform the rite himself, cf. 1 Cor. 1:13-17? (b) "tarry"—did he probably do so, cf. Acts 11:3?

#### THIRD STEP: TOPICS.

1. **Cornelius.** (1) to what nationality did he belong? (2) what was his official position? (3) how came he to be in Caesarea? (4) describe his religious character and life (cf. *vv.* 2, 22). (5) what had led him to adopt the Jehovah worship? (6) was he one of a large class thus peculiarly accessible to the Gospel? (7) in what respects and to what extent did he conform to the Jewish ritual? [(8) why was this most important pending revelation to be given to and through Cornelius?] (9) does the narrative presuppose an acquaintance, on Cornelius's part, with the facts of Christ's life, cf. Acts 10:37f? [(10) under what circumstances was the vision given him? [(11) was the vision internal or external, a spiritual or a physical phenomenon?] (12) why was a supernatural communication necessary in this instance? [(13) compare the four accounts of this vision, Acts 10:3-6, 22, 30-33, and 11:13f, noting and explaining any divergences.] (14) why does the narrator dwell on such length, and with so much repetition, upon this incident?

2. **The Trance-Vision of Peter.** (1) compare this account (10:9-16) with that given in 11:5-10, explaining the variations. (2) consider how this supernatural manifestation to Peter corresponds to and complements that given to Cornelius. [(3) what is the nature of a trance, as distinguished from a vision?] [(4) observe how the medium of revelation attaches to Peter's natural condition of hunger.] (5) why was it necessary that Peter should be taught the new Gospel truth in this miraculous way? (6) exactly what was the meaning of the symbolic vision? (7) when did the interpretation become clear to Peter?

3. **The Ceremonial Law.** (1) what were the Mosaic provisions concerning the clean and unclean, cf. Lev. 11:1sq; Deut. 14:1sq; Dan. 1:8-12. (2) how had this legislation been observed by the Jews? (3) what was the

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original purpose of such distinctions and restrictions? (4) did they accomplish this end in the Jewish history? (5) why were they done away in the Christian dispensation? (6) how had God cleansed the unclean, as was announced in the vision to Peter? (7) what was Christ's teaching on this subject, cf. Mk. 7:15? (8) was this an abolition of the Mosaic legislation, or an elevation of it into the moral and spiritual sphere? (9) what was Paul's doctrine concerning the clean and unclean, cf. Rom. 14:14; 2:28f? (10) why had not Peter more clearly apprehended the Christian conception of, and attitude toward, these matters?]

**4. Divine Promulgation of the Universality and Spirituality of Christianity.** (1) what was the conception of the apostles concerning the coming in of the Gentiles? (2) to what extent did this conception accord with the teaching of Christ on that point, and why was it in some measure erroneous? (3) what was Christ's idea of the way and time in which this great and essential truth of the Gospel should be developed and realized? [(4) why was this problem left for the Primitive Church to solve?] [(5) what view did Stephen and other Hellenists take as regarded Gentile admission to the Church?] (6) what was Peter's view in the matter, and why? [(7) are there indications that he had been working toward a broader conception of the Gospel?] (8) consider the readiness and honesty with which he accepted and acted upon the newly revealed truth. (9) exactly what was the content of the divine revelation made at this time? (10) what was its significance to the Church then, and also in succeeding centuries?

**5. Peter's Address to Cornelius and His Friends.** (1) consider the logical outline: (a) a declaration that Christianity is for all who will. (b) an appeal for its acceptance by preaching Jesus, as to his person, his work, his death, his resurrection, and his eternal exaltation. (c) a prophetic substantiation of this. (d) announcement of redemption and forgiveness of sins through Christ. (2) are we to suppose that Luke has given us but a mere abstract of what was said on this occasion? [(3) does the address seem to have been left unfinished; if so, what should have been added?] (4) what is Peter's doctrine here concerning the relation of the Gentiles to God—that if righteous they are acceptable without becoming Christians, or that they are thus acceptable candidates for Christianity, cf. Rom. 10:12f? (5) how does v. 43 stand in doctrinal relation with vv. 34f? [(6) have these words of Peter any connection whatever with the question of the salvation of the heathen who have not had the Gospel preached to them?] (7) consider the way in which Peter adapts his address to the Gentile condition of his hearers, especially in his subordination of the argument from prophecy. (8) compare carefully this address with former ones by Peter, recorded in Acts 2-5, noting differences of content, of emphasis, of view, etc. (9) name the chief characteristics of this address to Cornelius and his friends.

**6. The Gentile Pentecost.** (1) compare this impartation of the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles with that to the Jews recorded in Acts 2, as to: (a) time, (b) circumstances, (c) phenomena, (d) importance. (2) was it as a benediction and confirmation of Peter's utterances that the Spirit came while he "yet spake"? (3) do we know of any other instance where the Spirit baptism preceded water baptism? (4) what was the importance of the subsequent symbolic baptism, when the substantial baptism had already been received? (5) was it to indicate the acceptance by the Church of these Gentile converts, as the Spirit baptism had indicated their acceptance by God?

## FOURTH STEP: OBSERVATIONS.

1. Up to this point Christianity has been Jewish—all Christians have been Jews or have become such by conforming to the Judaic ceremonial law.

2. They held that, while the Gospel was also for and should be preached to the Gentiles, nevertheless they could only become Christians after they had become Jewish proselytes, adopting the Judaic religious system.

3. The time had come for an expansion of the Gospel which would embrace both Jews and Gentiles, and upon an equal footing.

4. It was appropriate that Peter, the chief of the original twelve apostles, should become possessed of this higher and larger conception of the Gospel, as was by divine providence accomplished.

5. Cornelius was one of a large class of Gentiles who, disgusted with their national pagan religions, had accepted the Israelitish worship of Jehovah as worthier and more satisfactory; yet he was anxious for some form of religion still better, as his interest in Christianity attests.

6. The divine communications to himself and to Peter bring about the higher knowledge and religious state which Cornelius was seeking.

7. The description of this event by the sacred narrator is detailed and repetitious because he regarded it, and rightly, as of the first importance in a history of the Primitive Christian Church.

8. Peter is accompanied on this occasion by six Jewish Christians from Joppa who act as witnesses, advisers and assistants in this critical experience.

9. Peter is inspired to declare that Christianity is for all, independently of Judaism, and he preaches Jesus in the essential aspects of his person and work.

10. The Holy Spirit is imparted to the Gentile converts with much the same circumstance and impressiveness as to the Jewish converts on the Day of Pentecost; perhaps it was not a less important event.

11. Water baptism was administered to the new Christians to signify that the Jewish members welcomed them into the Christian Church.

12. A similar inauguration of the universal spiritual Gospel was taking place, or about to take place, in Antioch of Syria.

## FIFTH STEP: SUMMARY.

1. Make a statement which will set forth the facts of this Section concerning:

- (1) the character and work of Peter.
- (2) the substance of the Apostolic teaching.
- (3) the doctrine of the Primitive Church concerning Christ.
- (4) the divine method of developing and revealing truth.
- (5) the characteristics of Spirit baptism.
- (6) the characteristics of water baptism.

[2. State what you understand to be Peter's doctrine, here given, concerning Gentiles of upright life.]

3. State what the attitude of the Christian Church had been, up to this time, respecting the admission of Gentiles within its pale.

4. Describe in detail the several steps which have been noted in the previous history, by which the Church was prepared for the promulgation of this new truth.

5. Define the content of the revelation made to and through Peter, and estimate its significance to the history.

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SIXTH STEP : TEACHINGS.

1. Readiness to be led by Providence, not only into new fields of work, but also into new fields of truth, is characteristic of the genuine Christian.
2. The progress of the Church is in God's hands—a thing more manifest at some times than at others, but always true.
3. Historical Christianity is divinely ordained to be preached to, and to be accepted by, all men, as the one true and sufficient religion.
4. God is no respecter of persons.
5. The divine plan is, that men shall instruct and persuade their fellow-men—human agency, where possible, is the divine method for upbuilding the Kingdom of God on earth.

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